

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
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AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE
SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5296

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 4 LAGOS 14201

BRUSSELS PASS USDEL FOR THE SECRETARY FROM MCHENRY AND PETTERSON

PARIS FOR DICK MOOSE FROM MCHENRY
ND PETTERSON

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV WA SF
SUBJECT: NAMIBIAN TALKS: AN ASSESSMENT

THE FOLLOWING DRAFT ASSESSMENT HAS BEEN PREPARED BY US AND
BILL BOWDLER. WE HAVE PRESENTED IT TO OUR CONTRACT GROUP
COLLEAGUES, ALL OF WHOM HAVE AGREED TO THE FIRST SIX PARAGRAPHS
OF THE TEXT. THE GERMAN AND CANADIAN ALSO AGREE WITH THE REMAINDER
OF WHAT WE HAVE WRITTEN, BUT THE FRENCH AND BRITISH ARE STILL
DELIBERATING OVER THE CONCLUSIONS PUT FORWARD IN THE LAST SIX
PARAGRAPHS. FULL AGREEMENT ON THIS ASSESSMENT WILL, AT BEST,
BE DELAYED AND PERHAPS NOT ACHIEVABLE. BECAUSE WE BELIEVE THAT
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YOU MAY FIND OUR VIEWS USEFUL NOW, WE ARE TRANSMITTING THE
ASSESSMENT IN ITS CURRENT DRAFT FORM.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN POSITION

1. THROUGHOUT OUR NEGOTIATIONS, SOUTH AFRICA HAS SHOWN THAT IT WILL
NOT AGREE TO ANY NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WHICH IN ITS VIEW WOULD

ADVERSELY AFFECT THE TURNHALLE'S PROSPECTS OF POWER. IT RECOGNIZES, HOWEVER, THAT AN INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE SETTLEMENT WHICH ASSURED PROSPECTS OF A TURNHALLE VICTORY WOULD BE IN SOUTH AFRICA'S BEST INTERESTS, SINCE A TURNHALLE VICTORY IN AN ELECTION WHICH THE UN HAD DETERMINED TO BE FREE AND FAIR WOULD DEPRIVE SWAPO THEREAFTER OF MUCH OF ITS INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT. SOUTH AFRICA ALSO WISHES TO ENSURE, IN SO FAR AS POSSIBLE, THAT A SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENT IN NAMIBIA WILL CO-OPERATE WITH IT, SAFEGUARD ITS CONSIDERABLE INVESTMENTS IN THE TERRITORY, AND PROVIDE A BUFFER BETWEEN IT AND ANGOLA. THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT PROBABLY STILL REMAINS ANXIOUS TO AVOID A RUPTURE WITH WESTERN COUNTRIES. IT HAS THEREFORE SOUGHT TO AVOID APPEARING SO OBDURATE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS AS TO INCUR ACCUSATIONS THAT IT WAS NOT MAKING ANY SERIOUS EFFORT AT A SETTLEMENT.

2. THE LATEST ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH SOUTH AFRICA HAS CONFIRMED THESE TRENDS. IN ADDITION, THE SOUTH AFRICANS ONCE AGAIN EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT THE SITUATION WITHIN NAMIBIA IS DETERIORATING, AND SAID THAT THEIR SUPPORTERS IN THE TERRITORY ARE ACCUSING SOUTH AFRICA OF BAD FAITH. THIS PROBABLY CONTRIBUTES TO THEIR DESIRE TO HAVE EARLY ELECTIONS IN NAMIBIA, AND IN ANY EVENT IT PROVIDES THEM WITH A PRETEXT FOR THEIR INSISTENCE ON ELECTIONS BY THE FIRST WEEK IN JUNE. THE MAJOR REASON FOR THEIR HASTE CONTINUES TO BE, IN OUR VIEW, THEIR AIM TO GIVE THE TURNHALLE AN ADVANTAGE OVER SWAPO IN AN ELECTION CAMPAIGN, IF SWAPO WERE TO PARTICIPATE. CONSISTENT WITH THIS, THE SOUTH AFRICANS CONTINUE TO ASSIST THE CAMPAIGN EFFORTS OF THE TURNHALLE THROUGH VARIOUS MEANS, E.G., MEDIA PROPAGAND
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A,
FINANCING, USE OF VEHICLES. ETC. (THEY ATTEMPT TO JUSTIFY THIS BY REFERRING TO THE AMOUNT OF INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT WHERE SWAPO ENJOYS.) WHILE SOME SOUTH AFRICANS WOULD STILL PREFER TO REACH AN INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE SETTLEMENT, THE NATIONAL PARTY'S RECENT ELECTION VICTORY MAY HAVE STRENGTHENED THE GOVERNMENT'S CONVICTION THAT THERE IS MUCH TO BE SAID FOR PRESSING AHEAD WITH THEIR OWN PLANS FOR NAMIBIA IRRESPECTIVE OF WESTERN (NOT TO MENTION UN) OPINION.

3. THE SOUTH AFRICANS SHIFTED THEIR POSITION TO A CERTAIN EXTENT IN THE CURRENT ROUND OF TALKS. THEY MAY HAVE WISHED TO SHOW THAT THEY REMAIN FLEXIBLE, AND THEY MAY HAVE CALCULATED THAT THE OTHER SIDE WOULD NOT ACCEPT OUR OWN IDEAS, LET ALONE ANYTHING SOUTH AFRICA MIGHT PROPOSE. WHATEVER THE REASON, THE SOUTH AFRICANS HAVE NOW ACCEPTED, ALBEIT WITH CONDITIONS WHICH HAVE LITTLE CHANCE OF ACCEPTANCE, TO MONITOR OBSERVANCE OF THE CEASEFIRE AND THE CONDITIONS AGREED TO REGARDING THE STATUS OF MILITARY FORCES DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD. THEY HAVE SAID THAT THEY MAY REDUCE THE SIZE OF THEIR OWN PROPOSED RESIDUAL CONTINGENT BY A QUARTER. THEY HAVE BEEN PREPARED TO POSTPONE AGAIN THE DATE OF ELECTIONS. NONE OF THESE SHIFTS, HOWEVER, IS INCONSISTENT WITH MOVING TOWARDS

AN INTERNAL SOLUTION DESIGNED TO IMPRESS OUTSIDE OPINION WITH THE REASONABLENESS OF SOUTH AFRICAN CONDUCT. THEIR RESIDUAL CONTINGENT WILL STILL BE THREE TIMES AS LARGE AS THE UN MILITARY ELEMENT. THE SOUTH AFRICANS ARE PROBABLY CONCERNED TO PRESERVE THE MINIMUM MILITARY CONTINGENT CONSISTENT WITH THEIR GENERAL DESIRE TO RETAIN A PRESENCE WHICH WILL REASSURE WHITE NAMIBIANS AND BLACKS WHO OPPOSE SWAPO THAT THEY ARE NOT ABANDONING THE TERRITORY TO SWAPO. A MILITARY PRESENCE OF THE SCOPE WHICH THE SOUTH AFRICANS WANT WOULD ALSO HAVE A PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT ON NAMIBIANS WHO MIGHT OTHERWISE SUPPORT SWAPO.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 4 LAGOS 14201

BRUSSELS PASS USDEL FOR THE SECRETARY FROM MCHENRY AND PETTERSON

PARIS FOR DICK MOOSE FROM MCHENRY AND PETTERSON

4. SINCE OUR FIRST MEETING WITH THEN, SWAPO HAS SHOWN A READINESS TO DISCUSS TERMS FOR A SETTLEMENT WHICH FALLS SHORT OF THEIR OWN STATED POSITION AND THAT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

THUS, SWAPO ACCEPTED THAT THE DE FACTO PRESENCE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN CIVILIAN ADMINISTRATION COULD NOT BE REMOVED; AND THEY HAVE ALSO ACCEPTED THE CONTINUING PRESENCE OF THE POLICE. THEY APPEAR TO HAVE REACHED AGREEMENT AMONG THEIR LEADERSHIP AT AN EARLY STAGE ON A NEGOTIATING POSITION WHICH HAS NOT VARIED SINCE IN ANY SIGNIFICANT

RESPECT. IN PARTICULAR, THEY INSIST THAT ALL SOUTH AFRICAN FORCES SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN FROM THE TERRITORY PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN. THEY DEEPLY DISTRUST THE SOUTH AFRICANS. BUT IN ADDITION THEIR OBJECTIVE IS TO GAIN POWER, AND THEY
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BELIEVE THAT A CONTINUING SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY PRESENCE WOULD BE A PSYCHOLOGICAL DISADVANTAGE TO THEIR CAUSE, JUST AS ITS REMOVAL WOULD BE SEEN AS A VERY CONSIDERABLE VICTORY FOR THEM.

5. AT OUR LAST ROUND OF TALKS, NUJOMA AND HIS COLLEAGUES SHOWED AN UNCHARACTERISTIC BRUSQUENESS IN THEIR DEALINGS WITH US. WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT BOTH NYERERE AND KAUNDA BELIEVE THAT SWAPO HAS ADOPTED TOO RIGID A POSITION, AND THAT THE SWAPO LEADERSHIP IS DIVIDED ON WHETHER TO ACCEPT OUR PROPOSALS OR TO MAINTAIN THEIR EXISTING NEGOTIATING POSITION. THE HARDLINERS, POSSIBLY VERY MUCH INFLUENCED BY THE SOVIETS, MAY SEE NO REASON TO ACCEPT ANY OUTCOME TO

THE NEGOTIATIONS WHICH WOULD IN ANY WAY COMPROMISE THEIR STRONG INTERNATIONAL POSITION. THEY AND OTHERS MAY ALSO HAVE ARGUED THAT SWAPO SHOULD NOT MOVE UNTIL IT HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED TO WHAT EXTENT SOUTH AFRICA WOULD MAKE FURTHER CONCESSIONS.

THE FRONT LINE STATES

6. NYERE AND KHAMA SHOWED SIGNS OF DISENCHANTMENT WITH SWAPO, AND BOTH WOULD ACCEPT A COMPROMISE SOLUTION IN NAMIBIA. MOST FRONT LINE LEADERS FELT THAT THE PROPOSED UN MILITARY ELEMENT WOULD HAVE TO BE SUBSTANTIALLY GREATER THAN THAT IN OUR PROPOSAL (WHICH SOUTH AFRICA WANTS AN EVEN SMALLER FORCE). BUT IN TERMS OF EFFECTIVE INFLUENCE UPON SWAPO, THE TWO MOST IMPORTANT FRONT LINE COUNTRIES ARE ANGOLA AND ZAMBIA. IT IS TOO EARLY TO JUDGE TO WHAT EXTENT THESE COUNTRIES WOULD BE WILLING TO ACCEPT EFFECTIVE MONITORING OF SWAPO BASES WITHIN THEIR BORDERS, AND MORE GENERALLY TO WHAT EXTENT THEY WOULD BE PREPARED TO PRESS SWAPO TO AGREE TO A SETTLEMENT IF, AS NOW IS THE CASE, SWAPO SHOWED THEMSELVES RELUCTANT OR OPPOSED.

CONCLUSIONS
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7. IT WAS EVIDENT DURING THESE TALKS THAT THE SOUTH AFRICANS CONTINUE
D
TO FOLLOW A TWO-TRACK APPROACH TO A NAMIBIAN SETTLEMENT. AS LONG AS THE CONTACT GROUP REMAINS ACTIVE IN THE SEARCH FOR AN INTERNA-

TIONALLY ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION, TEH SAG WISHES TO BE SEEN AS COOPERATING
G
WITH THE EFFORT AND WISHES TO AVOID BEING BLAMED FOR INTRANSIGENCE
AND OBSTRUCTIVENESS. ON THE OTHER HAND THE SAG IS CLEARLY
PROCEEDING WITH STEP DESIGNED TO ADVANCE AN INTERNAL SOLUTION
SHOULD THE FIVE POWER NEGOTIATIONS FALTER.

8. WHAT CAME INTO SHAPRER FOCUS DURING THIS ROUND OF TALKS IS A
SOUTH AFRICAN UNWILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT TERMS WHICH WOULD UNDULY
RISK THE ABILITY OF ITS CLIENTS TO WIN THE ELECTIONS OR INHIBIT THE
SAG'S ABILITY TO REESTABLISH ITS MILITARY CONTROL IN THE NORTHERN
AREA SHOULD IT CONSIDER IT NECESSARY. THIS IS REFLECTED IN THE
INSISTENCE THAT:

---EVEN PARITY BETWEEN SOUTH AFRICAN AND UN FORCES IS
UNACCEPTABLE AND THE RATIO SHOULD BE AROUND 3.1
IN THEIR FAVOR;

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 4 LAGOS 14201

BRUSSELS PASS USDEL FOR THE SECRETARY FROM MCHENRY AND PETTERSON

PARIS FOR DICK MOOSE FROM MCHENRY AND PETTERSON

---PLATOON SIZE UNITS OF SOUTH AFRICAN FORCES MUST

REMAIN IN THE EIGHT FORWARD BASES;

---UN PERSONNEL MUST BE RESTRICTED IN TERMS OF THEIR
GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION AND FUNCTION;

---IF THE SOUTH AFRICAN FORCES ARE TO BE MONITORED BY
THE UN, LIKEWISE UN UNITS MUST BE MONITORED BY
CORRESPONDING SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY OBSERVERS.

9. BRAND FOURIE'S REMARK IN AN UNGUARDED MOMENT THAT PLATOON
UNITS IN THE FORWARD BASES ARE DESIGNED TO PROVIDE THE NECESSARY
HOLDING ACTION UNTIL SOUTH AFRICAN REINFORCEMENTS ARRIVE SHOWS A
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LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN THE UN SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE'S ABILITY TO
MAINTAIN A "VISIBLE PEACE" IN THE BORDER AREA AND GIVES CREDENCE
TO THE CONTENTION OF SWAPO AND OTHERS THAT THE SAG IS UNWILLING
TO REMOVE ITS MILITARY INFLUENCE IN THE AREA. AN INTERESTING
FEATURE OF THE DISCUSSION ON WITHDRAWAL WAS A SHIFTING OF EMPHASIS
IN THE SAG RATIONALE FOR MAINTAINING ITS FORCES IN THE BORDER AREA.
HERETOFORE THE WEIGHT OF ITS ARGUMENTS WAS THAT THE CUBAN-MPLA
THREAT MADE THIS NECESSARY. THIS TIME THEY HARDLY MENTIONED THIS
ASPECT, ARGUING INSTEAD THE NEED TO OFFSET THE UN MILITARY PRESENCE
NOW CONTEMPLATED BY THE CONTACT GROUP AND TO MONITOR UN FORCES SO
THAT THEIR PRESENCE DOES NOT INFLUENCE THE ELECTIONS.

10. THE SAG SPOKESMEN MADE IT EQUALLY CLEAR THAT WHILE THE INTERNATIO
NAL
EFFORT TO FIND A SETTLEMENT PROCEEDS, UNILATERAL STEPS LEADING TO THE
INDEPENDENCE OF NAMIBIA DURING 1978 WILL CONTINUE. THE EDICTS PUT OUT
BY THE ADMINISTRATOR-GENERAL SINCE THE THIRD ROUND OF TALKS MUST BE
SEEN IN THIS LIGHT. BOTHA'S CATEGORICAL STATEMENT THAT ELECTIONS
WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY AND FRIDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK
OF JUNE ADDS FURTHER CONCRETENESS TO THEIR PLANS.

11. FROM THE START THE SAG HAS BEEN DUBIOUS OF THE CONTACT GROUP'S
ABILITY TO WORK OUT A SETTLEMENT. IT HAS WORKED ALONG WITH THE FIVE
POWERS BECAUSE IT HAS NOT WANTED TO RUN THE RISK OF OBSTRUCTING AN
EFFORT THAT WOULD PREDISPOSE THEM AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA AND AGGRAVATE
AN ADVERSE WORLD REACTION. AT THE SAME TIME THE SOUTH AFRICANS
HAVE BEEN CAREFUL TO LIMIT THEIR "CONCESSIONS" TO AREAS WHERE THEIR
ABILITY, OR THAT OF THEIR CLIENTS, TO INSURE A FAVORABLE OUTCOME
OF THE PROCESS IS NOT COMPROMISED. A SWAPO VICTORY REMAINS
UNTHINKABLE AND UNACCEPTABLE TO SOUTH AFRICA.

12. THERE IS PROBABLY SOME FURTHER GIVE IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN POSITION
BUT THE LIMITS ARE BEING RAPIDLY REACHED. THE STAND TAKEN ON WITH-
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DRAWAL OF SOUTH AFRICAN FORCES AND THE SIZE AND DISPOSITION OF THE MILITARY ELEMENT OF THE UNTAG IS CLEARLY INDICATIVE OF THIS. THE SAG CAN ONLY BE EXPECTED TO MAKE FURTHER CONCESSIONS WHEN IT IS CONFRONTED WITH PUBLIC SITUATIONS WHERE FAILURE TO DO SO PLACES RESPONSIBILITY ON THE SAG. PERSUASION IS NOT LIKELY TO MAKE THEM MOVE. THEY HAVE BEEN BUILDING WHAT THEY REGARD AS A CONVINCING RECORD OF THEIR "REASONABLENESS" DURING THE FOUR ROUNDS OF TALKS WHICH THEY HAVE EVERY INTENTION OF MAKING PUBLIC IF THE NEED ARISES. THEY WOULD LIKE TO PLACE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANY FAILURE OF THE TALKS ON SWAPO OR ON SO-CALLED NEW DEMANDS BY THE THE CONTACT GROUP, OR AT LEAST TO ENSURE THAT THE FOCUS IS NOT ON THEMSELVES. THEY WOULD HOPE THAT THIS WOULD PERSUADE SOME OR ALL OF THE FIVE WESTERN MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL NOT TO TAKE A STAND IN SUPPORT OF PRESSURE AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA. THIS HOPE COULD WELL BE BASED ON THEIR BELIEF IN THE POSSIBILITY THAT WHEN PRESSED, THE WESTERN FIVE WILL NOT APPLY THE "STERN MEASURES" ALLUDED TO THE FIVE-POWER DEMARCHE OF LAST APRIL.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 4 OF 4 LAGOS 14201

BRUSSELS PASS USDEL FOR THE SECRETARY FROM MCHENRY AND PETTERSON

PARIS FOR DICK MOOSE FROM MCHENRY AND PETTERSON

13. THE MOST HELPFUL NEXT STEP WOULD BE FOR THE CONTACT GROUP TO DEVELOP A FAIR SETTLEMENT PROPOSAL WHICH CAREFULLY (AND PERSUASIVELY) BALANCES THE BUILT-IN INFLUENCE WHICH THE SAG WOULD RETAIN DURING THE TRANSITION (CIVIL ADMINISTRATION, POLICE, INFRASTRUCTURE, ETC.) WITH A NEUTRALIZING UN PRESENCE. THE LEVERAAGE WHICH MAKING SUCH A PROPOSAL PUBLIC WILL HAVE ON THE SAG WILL VARY IN PROPORTION TO THE CONTACT GROUP'S ABILITY TO ENLIST THE PUBLIC SUPPORT OF THE FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS AND SWAPO.

14. IF WE COULD GET SWAPO TO AGREE TO OUR PROPOSAL, WE WOULD PUT THE SOUTH AFRICANS IN A WEAKER NEGOTIATING POSITION. THEY WOULD BE CONFIDENTIAL

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CONFRONTED WITH THE RISK THAT THEY WOULD BE VIEWED AS THE PARTY WHICH WAS STANDING IN THE WAY OF A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT. HOWEVER, WITHOUT THE INTERCESSION OF THE FRONTLINE, SWAPO IS UNLIKELY TO MOVE FROM ITS CURRENT STANCE ON SOUTH AFRICAN TROOP WITHDRAWAL. NYERERE HAS TRIED AND FAILED TO GET NUJOMA AND COMPANY TO BE MORE FLEXIBLE. THE FRENCH REPORT THAT KAUNDA ALSO TRIED AND FAILED. THEREFORE, IF ANY FRONTLINE PRESSURE COULD BE MOBILIZED, TO BE EFFECTIVE IT WOULD REQUIRE THE WILLINGNESS OF AT LEAST THE ANGOLANS AND ZAMBIANS TO INTERCEDE. MOREOVER, THE BACKING OF NIGERIA COULD BE CRUCIAL. OBVIOUSLY, IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO GET THE AGREEMENT NECESSARY TO MOUNT SUCH AN EFFORT. WE DO NOT RPT NOT HAVE MUCH TIME. EITHER THE SOUTH AFRICAN COUNTERPROPOSAL COULD LEAK, DELIBERATELY OR OTHERWISE, SOON, ENGENDERING A "WE TOLD YOU SO" RESPONSE FROM THE AFRICANS AND UNWILLINGNESS TO COMPROMISE AT ALL ON THE TROOP WITHDRAWAL QUESTION. OR SOUTH AFRICA COULD ANNOUNCED AND BEGIN TO IMPLEMENT STEPS LEADING TO AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT. OR, FINALLY, THE SOUTH AFRICAN AUTHORITIES COULD TAKE FURTHER REPRESSIVE ACTIONS IN THE TERRITORY WHICH WOULD CONFIRM IN THE MINDS OF THE AFRICANS THEIR DEEP DISTRUST OF THE SAG AND EFFECTIVELY CLOSE THE DOOR TO ANY COMPROMISE ON TNDT.
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Subject: NAMIBIAN TALKS: AN ASSESSMENT THE FOLLOWING DRAFT ASSESSMENT HAS BEEN PREPARED BY US AND BILL BOWDLER. WE HAVE PRESENTED IT TO OUR CONTRACT
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